

## REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claim 1 is currently being amended. Support for the amendment to independent claim 1 can be found at least in the original specification on page 15, lines 13-27.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1, 3, 5, 7-10, 15-17, 20-25 and 27-29 are now pending in this application.

The Amendment is supplemental to the Amendment Accompanying Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed October 14, 2008, and the arguments therein are incorporated herein. Supplemental arguments regarding the present amendment to claim 1 follow.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites: “wherein the high purity Nb target is formed by melting due to multiple times of EB melting so as to reduce the Ta content and oxygen content and the dispersion in a Nb ingot and by plastic working the Nb ingot with a working rate in a range of 50 to 98%.” The homogenizing of Ta and oxygen in a Nb sputtering target of the invention of claim 1 is made by supplying a proper amount of heat energy to an ingot produced by EB melting multiple times, thereby the electrical resistance of wiring film formed from the target, and the decrease of dust can be realized. Ohhashi does not disclose any manufacturing method for forming a Nb target which would result in the structure of claim 1. With respect to JP 62-103335, which has been cited in the present application, it is disclosed that high purity Nb was obtained by the iodination of metal Nb and by the thermal decomposition thereof. The contents of Ta and oxygen disclosed therein are different from those in the present application. On the other hand, regarding Nb material in the market, the purity thereof is disclosed, but there is no disclosure of the dispersion state of Ta and oxygen in the Nb material as recited in claim 1.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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By

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